

North Treatment Facility Project

***Final Public Involvement Program
for
Site Selection and Mitigation for a
New Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility,
Associated Conveyance
and Marine Outfall***

King County Department of Natural Resources

August 2000



Clean Water – A Sound Investment

INTRODUCTION.....	5
WHY A NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY?	7
KING COUNTY'S NEW NORTH TREATMENT FACILITY.....	7
PURPOSE	9
GOALS.....	10
CORE CONSTITUENCIES.....	10
KEY THEMES.....	13
MILESTONE 1: IDENTIFYING LAND AREAS AND APPROVING CRITERIA	15
PROJECT FACT SHEET	18
OPINION LEADER INTERVIEWS.....	18
DISCOVERY INTERVIEWS.....	18
PROJECT IMAGE	19
DATABASE	19
WEBSITE.....	20
NEWSLETTERS.....	21
FOCUS GROUPS.....	21
MEDIA OUTREACH.....	22
SPECIAL EVENTS.....	22
SPEAKERS' BUREAU	22
INTRODUCTORY WORKSHOPS.....	23
DISPLAYS IN PUBLIC AREAS.....	24
INFORMATION REPOSITORIES	24
SLIDESHOW /VIDEO	25
SITING ADVISORY COMMITTEE.....	25
BRIEFINGS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS	26
CONSULTATION WITH TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS AND OTHER GROUPS.....	27
WORKSHOP(S) FOR REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS	27
COORDINATION WITH OTHER KING COUNTY DNR ACTIVITIES.....	28
MILESTONE TWO: THE 'TOP' SITES	30
PUBLIC WORKSHOPS.....	31
COMMUNITY CHECK-IN SESSIONS	32
NORTH END PROJECT OFFICE	32
MILESTONE THREE: THE 2-5 SYSTEM PACKAGES	35
PUBLIC OPINION POLLING.....	36
COMMUNITY DESIGN SUPPORT	36
OUTREACH TO THE NEXT GENERATION	37
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TO SUPPORT THE EIS.....	38
MILESTONE FOUR: THE PREFERRED SITE.....	40
OVERVIEW	40

Introduction

The objective of the public involvement program for the North Treatment Facility (NTF) and Marine Outfall Siting Study (MOSS) project is to inform and involve interested and affected constituencies in a manner that is open, far-reaching, and inclusive.

The public involvement program supports the overall goal for the project, which is to “to strive to reach agreement with local communities, agencies, and tribes on the preferred site for the development of a new regional treatment facility, its conveyance facilities and routes and marine outfall.”

The public involvement program will be integrated throughout the entire siting process, and will employ appropriate and well-designed methods to meet the needs of the process. The program is more than an assemblage of methods. The methods selected will facilitate open communication among all participants, including King County, the consultant team, the general public, and other constituent groups. Some methods were selected because they *communicate* information to the public, while others have been selected to give the public opportunities to *provide* information back to King County. Still others encourage the active discussion of the issues.

Used in combination, these methods will foster two-way communication. King County will provide the public with accurate and timely information about the project, and members of the public will participate in decision-making at each milestone of the project. Comments from the public, balanced with engineering and environmental considerations, will help King County make the most informed, equitable, and ultimately beneficial, decision regarding the siting of the new treatment plant, conveyance route, and marine outfall.

The following plan outlines:

- The goals of the public involvement program, as well as the core constituent groups that are most likely to be closely involved in the project.
- The ‘guiding parameters’ within which the public involvement program and siting process will operate.
- A detailed compilation of the specific public involvement methods that will be used throughout the three-year siting process.

Each technique includes an overall description, the constituent groups it reaches, as well as a timeframe and action plan for implementation. A ‘purpose/role’ section associated with each technique also describes what the technique is intended to achieve, as well as how it links with and supports other components of the public involvement plan.

This plan has been developed to provide a long-term approach and address public involvement needs as they are *currently* understood. However, as with any project of this duration and scale, it is impossible to accurately predict all of the constituency groups and issues that will emerge over the next three years. Therefore, this plan is a living document. It has been designed to be responsive to unforeseen circumstances, and to proactively engage the different publics who have an interest and/or a stake in the siting process. The plan, and its implementation, will be regularly reviewed to both ensure that those needs are being met, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods.

For copies of reports of these activities as they are developed, contact John Phillips at (206) 684-6799 or toll free at 1-888-707-8571.

Why a New Wastewater Treatment Facility?

King County's New North Treatment Facility

Why do we need a new wastewater treatment facility?

Our region is growing so quickly that unless we build a new facility, we will run out of capacity by 2010. A new regional treatment plant will provide the wastewater capacity we need to protect people from disease and the environment from pollution. It will also provide flexibility for an uncertain future that may include endangered species listings or new regulations.

Where will the new facility be located?

No site has been determined yet. King County is beginning to look for sites for a wastewater treatment plant plus the conveyance pipes and outfall to Puget Sound associated with the plant.

King County provides wastewater treatment service to most of the urban parts of King County and to approximately 46 square miles in south Snohomish County. The new facilities will be located somewhere in north King County or south Snohomish County, some of the most rapidly growing areas in the region. This new facility will provide more flexibility to King County's wastewater system, which currently includes regional treatment plants in Seattle and Renton.

How will the site be selected?

King County will begin with a large number of potential sites and narrow that number through a series of steps over the next three years. Public opinion and public comments will play an important role in shaping the process and the final decision. Individuals will have a number of opportunities to participate. A Siting Advisory Committee will help develop siting criteria. The King County Executive will select the best sites for the various facilities based on public opinion and detailed environmental review of the most likely options.

The goal is to have a location selected by the end of 2002, with the final plant constructed by 2010.

How much will it cost?

The new treatment facility and conveyance system will cost approximately \$600 million. "Growth pays for growth" financing will ensure that the cost is distributed equitably by adding new "hook up" charges to all new

construction and redevelopment in the service area. Revenue bonds will also finance the construction and keep monthly rates steady over the long run, adjusted for inflation.

What will it be like?

The treatment plant will be a good neighbor. King County plans to build a facility that meets the region's needs and enhances the local community. The County will work closely with communities to mitigate possible negative impacts and address specific concerns prior to and during construction and operation of the facility. King County's Wastewater Treatment Division has incorporated art, design, open space, sports fields and other amenities into its facilities to help them fit into communities in the past. A significant portion of the project budget has been set aside for mitigation.

How will the location of the outfall to Puget Sound be selected?

King County is initiating extensive studies of water currents, tides, marine animals and plants to learn more about Puget Sound in order to identify suitable sites for an outfall in the delicate marine environment. Scientists from King County, the University of Washington and state and federal agencies are working together on this analysis. Careful placement of the outfall will minimize any impacts on Puget Sound.

How will decisions be made?

The siting process can best be described in terms of four major milestones: developing policy criteria, selecting the top sites, selecting the top system packages and selecting the preferred system location. The first of these milestones will occur in late 2000, when the policy criteria are submitted to the King County Council for approval. Council approval on the criteria is expected in December 2000. The policy criteria package will incorporate comments from a wide variety of public interests (see graphic on page 15).

In addition to the development of the policy criteria, King County will be working to identify a number of potential sites for the treatment plant, the conveyance facilities and outfall, throughout 2000. King County will:

- create an inventory of largely undeveloped land areas within the siting area
- sponsor a community nomination process
- develop potential partnerships
- research commercial and industrial redevelopment opportunities.

As potential sites are identified, they will be analyzed according a set of "engineering and environmental" constraints . These "E&E" constraints are the very basic "yes" and "no" technical questions that begin the narrowing of sites. For example, any land area under consideration has to meet a minimal acreage requirement. Also, it is clearly not desirable to have a property that sits directly on top of a major earthquake fault line.

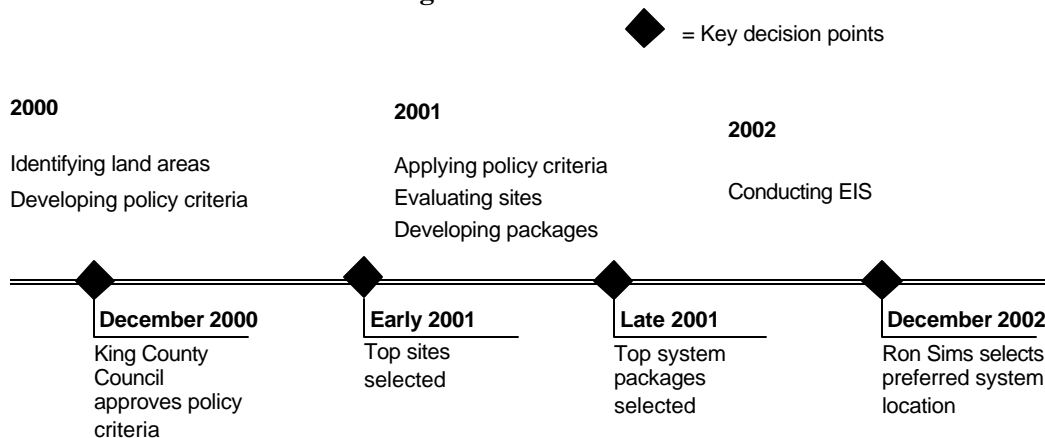
After the King County Council has approved the final policy criteria, work

will begin to apply the criteria to the land areas that remain in consideration after the E&E constraints have been applied. It is anticipated that during the first quarter of 2001, approximately 10-15 potential sites will be selected. Again, the public will have extensive opportunities to review and comment on this site selection process.

Throughout 2001, the potential remaining sites will be subject to additional analysis and scrutiny. They will be evaluated, not only according to the 'plant site' itself, but also according to the associated conveyance system and outfall that will be installed along with the treatment plant, ensuring that the analysis is based on 'system packages' rather than just a single wastewater plant site. By the end of 2001, it is anticipated that the top system packages (approximately 2-5) will have been selected. These top system packages will be evaluated through an extensive Environmental Impact Statement process that is expected to be carried out throughout 2002. Public involvement will be key throughout this process.

King County Executive Ron Sims will make a final decision on the preferred plant location, and its associated conveyance system and outfall locations.

Timeline of Siting Process Milestones



Purpose

This public involvement program provides guidelines on how the public will be informed of and involved in the North Treatment Facility siting process. It has been designed to ensure a high level of feedback, discussion, and debate from as many individuals and groups as possible. It is King County's intent to provide opportunities to involve the public in great depth and breadth. That is, there will be opportunities to reach out to and include a broad cross-section of the population, in concert with opportunities to involve a smaller number of individuals in thorough, detailed, 'hands-on' mechanisms.

The public involvement program is linked to, and supports, all of the disciplines and activities that make up the comprehensive siting process. These

include engineering and environmental design and analysis, as well as the plant's design and mitigation for any operational and construction impacts.

Goals

The NTF/MOSS public involvement program operates under the principle that, by extensively involving the public, any decisions regarding the final site will ultimately be better ones. The program has the following goals:

- 1) To provide the King County/Consultant team and decision-makers, as well as other interested parties, with a broad and deep understanding of public opinion, so that the team is fully aware of the values, needs, interests, and perspectives that must be represented in the siting process.
- 2) To provide interested and affected constituents with a range of opportunities and a range of methods through which they can be informed of and involved in the siting process. Specific groups and individuals are likely to access and be engaged in the process at different times. The use of a variety of methods will ensure groups and individuals have opportunities to participate in ways that meet their needs.
- 3) To provide opportunities for the open and healthy debate of the issues related to NTF and MOSS among all interested parties at all phases of the project.
- 4) To clearly identify this endeavor as a King County development project, and clearly identify the process and timeline that will be used to site the facility, conveyance, and outfall.
- 5) To connect this project within the greater context of the Regional Wastewater Services Plan. Particular elements of that plan most relevant to this effort include the Habitat Conservation Plan and the Water Reuse Program.
- 6) To avoid surprises. The County is committed to a fair, open, and inclusive effort that avoids surprises – either from King County or from interested communities or individuals.

Core Constituencies

The needs, issues, and opinions of individuals and groups within the affected area of the project are diverse and complex, and can be approached from many perspectives. Likewise, it is known that different constituency groups cannot be effectively included in the process using the same methods and techniques. This public involvement program, has been designed with a variety of methods to inform and involve as many people as possible, and to match those methods to the time(s) in the siting process when they can be most effective and provide the best opportunity for input. The core constituencies identified at this point include:

- **The general public**

Because they use the system and pay rates, it is probably safe to say that a large percentage of the population of greater King County and a good portion of Snohomish County will at some level be affected by this project. Several public involvement methods have been identified and described as appropriate and effective to include this constituency through all phases of the siting process.

- **Community and neighborhood groups**

Specific communities and/or neighborhoods will need to be included in the project, particularly in the latter stages of the siting process when there are a relatively small number of properties still under consideration as potential sites. These communities will require a greater number and types of public involvement activities to keep them informed, involved, and to incorporate their input into the project. Specific methods have been developed to ensure these groups are informed and involved in this process.

- **Elected officials**

A number of local and regional jurisdictions will be affected by the final decisions of where to site the facility, and are likely to be highly interested in participating in the decision-making process from a very early stage. To facilitate and provide a forum for their participation, elected officials from these jurisdictions will be involved on a regular basis throughout all phases.

- **Special interest groups**

There are a number of special interest groups that will want to be extensively involved in the NTF and MOSS process. It will be important to provide these groups with information they can use in their own publications and newsletters, and to offer presentations to these groups at their regular meetings. Specific interests expected to be involved in the project include: environmental activists, business and commerce organizations, civic groups, and the development community.

- **Key influential citizens**

There are a number of opinion leaders, community and neighborhood leaders etc. that do not fall under any specific “group” definition. Nonetheless, this group of individuals is strongly committed to what they firmly believe is the “right” course of action for the region and King County.

- **Landowners and other potential partners**

There are a significant number of strong possibilities for partnerships as the effort unfolds, and the County actively seeks the creation of these partnerships. This may include partnerships with communities, with private developers, or with other public entities. Every effort will be made to involve this audience in the process.

- **Tribal Governments and other public agencies**

Tribal, local, state, and federal agencies, as well as their interested constituents need to be consulted and involved throughout the siting process in order to ensure their interests are met, and that the siting process is coordinated with their plans and regulations.

- **‘Next door neighbors’**

King County is committed to working closely with those who own property and live and/or work in close proximity to the sites that are ultimately selected for the treatment facility, conveyance route, and marine outfall. King County will develop a list of these groups and individuals as the siting process is narrowed, and will make every effort to keep them informed and involved on a one-on-one basis.

- **Media**

A project as large as the NTF/MOSS siting process requires extensive media outreach. The number of people who can be informed about and involved in the siting process through traditional public involvement mechanisms (e.g. public meetings) is too limited. Broader media outreach will be necessary in order to publicize and inform citizens about the project, as well as provide opportunities for public feedback on the sites under consideration.

Key Themes

The following themes will be communicated to all constituent groups throughout the project, along with detailed project specific information. Key messages will be developed to communicate these themes effectively:

✕ **This facility is a vital regional need.**

Our region is growing so quickly that unless we build a new facility, we will run out of capacity by 2010. A new regional treatment plant will provide the wastewater capacity we need to protect people from disease and the environment from pollution. It will also provide flexibility for an uncertain future that may include endangered species listings or new regulations.

✕ **We'll have a fair and open process.**

King County begins the siting process fully open to all possible locations and partnerships for the new treatment plant, conveyance, and outfall. No decision on locations has been made, and no preferred alternative exists. There is currently a large number of potential sites being considered. These will be narrowed over time, with all sites subject to the same policy criteria.

✕ **The new plant allows for smart growth.**

Our region's challenge is to balance economic growth with environmental protection. A new wastewater treatment plant will meet the service needs of our urban population, helping to focus growth within the urban growth boundary and reduce pressure on rural lands. Treating our wastewater ensures high water quality for our use and enjoyment, as well as protection for other species that live in and around the area's water bodies.

✕ **The new system will enhance the community in which it is located.**

King County will build a facility that meets the region's needs and is mitigated in a manner that will benefit and provide assets to the local community. For example, facilities can be partially buried, fully landscaped, and developed jointly with other community amenities such as open space or ballfields. Likewise, a piece of vacant industrial or commercial property could be used for the new facility, and, at the same time, become a community amenity. In addition, King County facilities often include art and design concepts to enhance communities in which they are located. We will work closely with local communities as the number of sites gets narrowed, to develop ways to design and operate the plant in a way that makes it a community asset.

✕ **The new treatment system will reduce, reuse, and recycle.**

Water treated at the plant will be reused wherever possible for landscape watering needs. Biosolids generated at the plant will be treated and reused according to the best available technology. Recycled products will be used in the construction materials chosen for the plant. The County will site, build, and operate the plant in a way that makes the best, most efficient use of existing resources—sustaining the overall viability of the plant for the long haul.

✕ **The best possible techniques in environmental analysis, engineering, science and technology are being applied to this siting process.**

Rigorous environmental analysis will be used for both the land-side facilities and the marine outfall. A full team of consulting scientists and engineers are working to determine a) how those facilities may impact the environment; and, b) how they can be sited and operated in a way that fully mitigates for impacts. In addition, these scientists will be actively researching ways in which the new facility can actually enhance the environment.

The research has significant regional benefits as well. Marine studies will help identify appropriate sites for the outfall while protecting the delicate marine-shore environment. This information on currents, tides, marine animals and plants will also be used by other agencies and groups, including the University of Washington, to assist regional scientists in better understanding Puget Sound.

Milestone 1: Identifying Land Areas and Approving Criteria

Overview:

Two major actions occur in the early stages of the siting process, between April-December, 2000. First, all potential properties within the study area that may be suitable for the wastewater treatment system will be identified. Second, a set of policy criteria will be developed and broadly shared through the public involvement program. In approximately December 2000, the King County Council will approve the policy criteria.

The primary goals of the public involvement program during this phase of the project are to introduce the siting process to the public, actively look for potential development partnerships and sites, and create a solid platform for the ongoing engagement of core constituencies throughout the three-year siting process. To that end, a broad mix of methods will be used to cast a very wide net – intended to inform and engage as many interested parties as possible in the selection process.

Opportunities to Participate in the Decision-making Process

All public involvement opportunities will be designed to foster two-way communication between King County, individuals, and communities. The timing of specific activities will reflect the decision-making process and give citizens ample opportunities to participate in the site-selection process.

During this stage of the project, members of the public will have the opportunity to participate in the siting process in the following ways:

- Information will be provided about the schedule for the selection process, the opportunities for public involvement that will occur over that three-year period, and specific decisions, such as criteria. There will be opportunities for the public to add to the list of sites under consideration, point out areas for analysis, and suggest other mechanisms for public involvement in the process.
- Communities, and other entities, will have the opportunity to nominate themselves as “hosts” for the wastewater treatment facility, further adding to the list of the broad range of sites that will be reviewed during this first phase of the siting process.
- The public will have opportunities to shape the policy criteria by review-

ing project goals, and sharing concerns and values.

- A Siting Advisory Committee, representative of the interests of various jurisdictions throughout King and Snohomish Counties, will begin its deliberations, focusing on recommending policy criteria to the County Council during its early meetings.

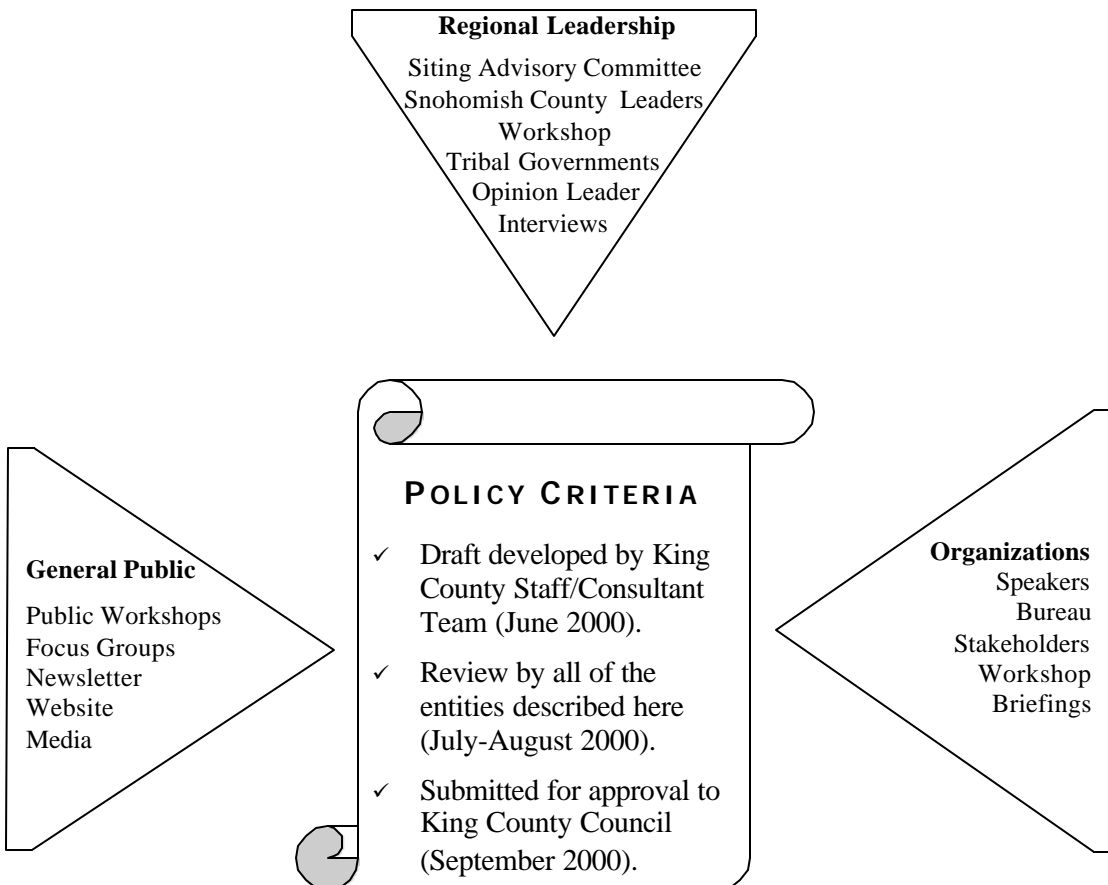
Methods:

A broad menu of public involvement methods will be used during the project. These methods will be implemented to ensure that timely information is given and input from all constituent groups is obtained continually during the process, and is sought to support key decisions. The methods are designed for use in coordination with one another, so that the appropriate methods are used to inform or involve the targeted constituency groups. All of the methods selected have different characteristics regarding their ability to collect information (quantitative and qualitative), give information, encourage discussion, and reach different audiences, etc. The following list represents the mechanisms and tools that will be used to both inform and involve core constituencies throughout Phase One.

- ◆ Project fact sheet
- ◆ Opinion leader interviews
- ◆ Discovery interviews
- ◆ Project image
- ◆ Comprehensive database
- ◆ Website
- ◆ Newsletters
- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Media outreach
- ◆ Special events
- ◆ Speakers' bureau
- ◆ Introductory public workshops
- ◆ Project displays
- ◆ Information repositories
- ◆ Slideshow
- ◆ Siting Advisory Committee meetings
- ◆ Stakeholder Workshop

- ◆ Briefings to elected officials
- ◆ Consultation with Tribal Governments and other groups
- ◆ Coordination with other King County DNR Activities

How the Public Will Influence Policy Criteria



Project Fact Sheet

Description:

A project fact sheet has been developed. It outlines the project's purpose and need, provides information on the siting process and timeline, and clarifies key elements of the project. It also serves as the basis for sharing information during the opinion leader interviews.

Purpose/role:

The fact sheet will help inform key individuals and groups about the process and timeline for the project, and will help those individuals and groups give information to their constituents that is accurate and timely. The fact sheet also serves as a unifying piece of 'project language' that ensures that all members of the King County consultant team are communicating about the project in the same way.

Timeframe:

The project summary was completed in May 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The project summary is an informational tool for all of the core constituencies described in this plan.

Opinion Leader Interviews

Description:

Interviews with approximately 100 leaders from throughout greater King and Snohomish Counties were conducted.

Purpose/role:

To inform leaders about the siting process and timeline, to get their input and ideas on the siting process, to better understand their issues, and to ask for their suggestions for possible candidates for the siting advisory committee.

Timeframe:

The interviews were completed in April - May 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

Opinion leaders in greater King and Snohomish Counties.

Discovery Interviews

Description:

A number of interviews will be conducted with individuals in King and Snohomish County to gather information about the nature and character of the project area. This is an intuitive "data gathering" effort.

Purpose/Strategic Link:

To gather information about the history, character, interests, and design of the project area; to understand the natural and built environment of the study area and to inform the mitigation design process and response.

The results of these interviews will become the basis for the mitigation strategic plan, which will identify how sites might be most appropriately designed and mitigated in the context of the greater community. While the results of the interviews are most directly tied to long-term mitigation plans, they are linked, as well, to the public involvement process, and the results of the interviews will be broadly shared with all members of the King County/Consultant team.

Timeframe:

Interviews will occur in summer 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this strategy:

King County Cultural Resources staff will be contacted for input and suggestions. Local historical societies and local arts councils in both counties will be contacted.

Project Image

Description:

A project image, including a project name, will be developed to serve as the project's identity. This image will be incorporated into all project and public involvement materials.

Purpose/role:

The project image will incorporate, to the extent possible, the messages and themes of the project. It will remain a symbol for the project throughout the life of the facility.

Timeframe:

Final image design will be completed by the end of August 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The image will be targeted at all constituencies.

Database

Description:

A comprehensive public involvement database will be developed to serve the project. This database will incorporate the project mailing list, and will also be used to track specialized areas, such as speakers' bureau presentations and other particular events and issues. The database will allow for the coordination and tracking of all public involvement activities. For example, for the

speaker's bureau, the database will be able to run queries on number of presentations, types of groups presented to, and the comments generated from those presentations, etc.

The current RWSP database is quite small at approximately 3000, and will need to be expanded considerably.

Purpose/role:

While the database in and of itself is not a public involvement technique, it will help us to identify and ultimately inform as many people as possible on a regular basis about the project and its progress. It is a vital link to the success of virtually every other public involvement technique.

Timeframe:

Expansion of the database will begin upon project inception and will continue throughout the project.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

All core constituencies will be included in the database. We will categorize the list by constituency group, e.g. general public, organized groups, advisory committee, etc., for tracking purposes.

Website

Description:

A website will be in place to inform the public about the project, and ways in which interested parties might participate, as well as to collect input from the public. The design will reflect the look and feel of other project materials in order to establish and maintain the project's identity. The website will be designed to encourage discussion among those who visit the site. The site will allow visitors to make comments, ask questions about the project, and receive additional information.

Purpose/role:

The website will allow a broad community to stay informed and remain engaged in the siting process from beginning to end. It will be used as both a repository for general and detailed information, as well as a forum for the discussion of issues related to the siting process. Information obtained through the website will influence the decision process in all three phases of the project.

Timeframe:

The website will be in place in August 2000. It will be updated at regular and frequent intervals throughout the life of the project.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The website will be advertised and available to all core constituencies.

Newsletters

Description:

A project newsletter will be distributed at regular intervals throughout the siting process. It will incorporate the project image and will be used as a mechanism to share project information, as well as to collect feedback and comment.

Purpose/role:

To provide a broad base of both individual citizens and organized groups with general project information, and to provide exposure for the project. The newsletters will be closely linked to other methods, including the workshops. The information gathered through the newsletter feedback mechanisms will influence decisions during the entire siting process.

Timeframe:

At least 15 newsletters will be distributed at key points throughout the siting process. The first newsletter was mailed during the first week of June, 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

All of the core constituencies highlighted by this plan.

Focus Groups

Description:

Four focus groups were conducted with participants randomly recruited from various geographical areas throughout in south Snohomish County/north King County. The purpose of the focus groups was to test overall levels of awareness, and possible support, for the new treatment plant, conveyance, and outfall. The themes and messages that will be used for the siting process were also tested in focus group format.

Purpose/role:

To better understand the general public's opinions, issues, and values regarding the siting project. The focus group technique allows for the random selection of participants from a broad or narrow cross section of the public. It also allows for probing in specific issue areas, in order to provide King County with a deeper understanding of public opinion. These groups provided a better understanding of the language and themes that most clearly express project issues to the public. Results from these focus groups will also provide guidance to the development of the media plan.

Timeframe:

The focus groups were conducted on May 30th and June 1st, 2000.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The general public via a random sample of southern Snohomish and northern King counties.

Media Outreach

Description:

A comprehensive media outreach technique will be essential throughout the three-year siting process. Traditional public involvement methods (e.g. public meetings, newsletters) cannot reach and involve the number of people that may ultimately be interested, and involved in, the siting effort. It will be important to fully utilize the media opportunities available throughout the region. A comprehensive media plan has been developed, and is attached as a separate document to this plan.

Special Events

Description:

A list of special events and opportunities to share information and obtain public input on the siting process will be developed. For example, the King County staff who operate the research boat could appear at different events to explain what they are doing in relation to the siting process. Tours of the existing plants could also be promoted as ways for those interested to learn more about what is involved with the treatment of waste.

Purpose/role:

A technique to publicize the project at special events and places will allow the project to be exposed to a wider and potentially interested audience(s).

Timeframe:

These kinds of events will be identified and scheduled as appropriate throughout the siting process.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The general public, community and neighborhood group, and special interest groups.

Speakers' Bureau

Description:

A list of non-profit, business, neighborhood, etc., organizations in north King County/south Snohomish County will be compiled and maintained as prospective audiences for presentations on the siting process. In addition to developing materials for these presentations, information about the siting process will be provided for posting in organizational newsletters and web-

sites. A highly proactive outreach effort will be made to reach out to these groups and offer presentations to them. The presentations will be structured in a way that allows for in-depth questions and discussion from the audience. This will guarantee more than a one-way presentation, allowing for ample feedback from the audience.

Purpose/role:

To reach out to a range of interests through the use of existing forums to communicate, generate discussion, and collect feedback on the siting process. This technique allows us to ‘go where they are’ and provides multiple opportunities beyond the meetings that King County will sponsor in support of the siting process. This technique makes it possible for a broad range of interests and perspectives to be engaged. Information gathered through this technique will influence decisions in all three phases of the siting process.

Timeframe:

Presentations will continue throughout the siting process.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

Community and neighborhood groups, and special interest groups.

Introductory Workshops

Description:

Three introductory workshops were held in June 2000. At these workshops, King County staff provided extensive information on the siting process, wastewater treatment in general, and wastewater treatment plants that serve as valuable models for this King County process. Following an ‘open house’ format, King County staff made a presentation about the siting process. Attendees were asked to share their thoughts on how the policy criteria for the process can best be developed. Attendees also asked a number of questions about the siting process, MOSS study, and other elements of the project.

Purpose/role:

These workshops, in conjunction with the other techniques outlined in this section, served to introduce the project to the general public. They were heavily advertised, and provided the general public with the opportunity to meet in person with King County, the consultant team, and each other, and to be informed, discuss and debate, and provide input to the project. A summary of the meetings is being mailed to all who attended them. For a copy of this summary please contact John Phillips at (206) 684-6799

Timeframe:

These workshops were held June 13, 14, and 15, 2000 at the following locations:

June 13, 2000: Bothell Public Library

June 14, 2000: Mill Creek, Jackson High School

June 15, 2000: Shoreline Public Library

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:
The general public, as well as specific communities.

Displays in Public Areas

Description:

Public display areas will serve to both share information and obtain public feedback. Graphics and themes used in the workshops will be posted as displays wherever and whenever possible, e.g. libraries and special events. The displays will provide information on the NTF/MOSS process, and will also offer an opportunity for public feedback and comment on the project.

Purpose/role:

The purpose of the displays is twofold: first, to broaden the exposure of the project through their deployment in high traffic locations; and second, to inform those that are interested in the project at a general level and/or don't have the interest in or the time for attending one of the workshops or using one of the other techniques. Because the displays will be updated regularly as the project progresses, they will provide the public with a broad overview as well as identify project milestones. In addition, for those interested in more detail, they will be used to provide information about other ways to stay involved (website, meetings, presentations, etc.). Feedback obtained through the displays will influence decisions in all phases of the project.

Timeframe:

The displays will be posted in July 2000, and will be updated throughout the project as appropriate.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:
The general public.

Information Repositories

Description:

Information repositories will be established early on, and will remain in place throughout the duration of the siting process. These repositories will be at conveniently located libraries throughout the King-Snohomish area. At these sites, members of the public will be able to review key documents related to the project, including the public involvement plan, policy criteria, environmental and engineering analysis, and a host of other pertinent information.

Purpose/role:

To create a convenient point for any interested member of the public to review, and further study, all elements related to the siting process. Feedback mechanisms will be in place at these sites; for example, we will urge users to use the library computer to find the website and give us comments. These will influence decisions during all phases of the project.

Timeframe:

These sites will be set up in July 2000, and will be maintained throughout the duration of the project.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The general public.

Slideshow/Video

Description:

A high quality slideshow and/or video will be developed to be used in public workshops and other presentations and speaking engagements. These shows will outline the King County siting process and highlight other successful treatment plants operating throughout the U.S. They will also present alternative models for treatment plants in the King County area.

Purpose/role:

This product will be used as a tool to clearly construct the process in a highly graphic medium, as well as to generate interest in the project. Examples of treatment plant development throughout the world will be used to show that there are benefits related to treatment plants, and that King County intends to be a good neighbor in its siting and development processes. The slideshow/video will also educate viewers about the purpose of and need for the entire project and explain how it fits into the broader context of the RWSP. The slideshow will serve as a support tool for many of the methods outlined in this plan.

Timeframe:

A video exists, and is being used as appropriate. A slideshow has also been created, and will be updated on a regular basis.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The general public, community and special interest groups, elected officials, and the siting advisory committee.

Siting Advisory Committee

Description:

A Siting Advisory Committee will advise King County Executive Ron Sims,

and Snohomish County Executive Bob Drewell on the process of the siting effort. The Committee will work throughout the first one and a half years of the project, concluding its work when approximately 2-5 system packages have been selected for analysis through an Environmental Impact Statement process. Committee representatives will include individuals from all of the municipalities in north King and south Snohomish Counties, tribal governments, and a variety of special interest groups. A separate document, detailing the membership and scope of work for the Committee, has been created.

Purpose/role:

The Committee process will ensure that those communities and interests that are most likely to be interested in, or affected by, the new treatment facility have a direct voice in the process. The role of the Committee will be to ensure that the policy criteria are developed, and applied, in a fair and consistent manner. The Committee will also serve as a “quality check” to ensure that both the siting effort and the accompanying public involvement program are carried out as effectively as possible.

Timeframe:

The Committee will begin its work in June 2000, and will continue meeting until late 2001.

Briefings to Elected Officials

Description:

Local and regional elected officials from throughout King and Snohomish counties will be regularly briefed throughout the three-year siting process. This will include presentations and discussions with elected officials at the county level, as well as elected officials from smaller jurisdictions throughout both counties, including, for example, city councils and water commissioners. King County staff will identify the various elected bodies that may benefit from regular briefings, and will set up a master calendar for when these briefings might occur. This calendar will, of course, be modified to ensure that briefings are provided whenever necessary and appropriate.

Purpose/role:

It will be important to make certain that elected officials are not caught unaware by any developments in the siting process. Likewise, we will want to better understand their issues or concerns as the siting process continues. We will want them to know what is taking place, the nature of public opinion regarding the various sites, and the ways in which they might work with us to foster viable partnerships in their local jurisdictions.

Timeframe:

A briefings calendar will be established in May 2000, and updated regularly.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:
Elected officials.

Consultation with Tribal Governments and other Groups

Description:

In addition to elected officials, there are a number of entities that should be briefed on, and engaged in, the siting process. In particular, these include:

- ✓ Tribal governments throughout the region
- ✓ MWPAAC (the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee)
- ✓ The Regional Water Quality Committee (RWQC)
- ✓ Snohomish County Leaders

Although tribal governments have been invited to participate in the Siting Advisory Committee, separate efforts will also be made to include them in all phases of the siting process. For example, Tribal Chairs will meet with Executive Ron Sims to review the policy criteria before they are submitted to the King County Council. These consultations will continue to occur over the three year process. Likewise, MWPAAC members as well as the membership of the Regional Water Quality Committee will be regularly briefed on the process, and asked to review and comment at each decision point.

Purpose/role:

King County maintains relationships with all of these groups on an ongoing basis. They have been instrumental in providing overall guidance to King County policies and programs and need to continue their influential role in the siting process.

Timeframe:

Briefings and discussions will occur as appropriate throughout the three year effort. A schedule for briefings and discussions with these groups will be created in June 2000.

Workshop(s) for Regional Stakeholders

Description:

In order to make this regional decision, King County needs to hear from a number of regional stakeholders in addition to those that serve on the Siting Advisory Committee. The larger cities of Seattle, Bellevue, Everett and Sub-

urban Cities need to weigh in as well as environmental groups and regulating agencies.

A workshop for these entities will be conducted in order to both share information about, and gain their feedback on, the draft policy criteria. Additional workshops may be held throughout the siting effort if appropriate.

Purpose/role:

These workshops will enable another circle of stakeholders with an interest in the process to become directly involved with the King County staff/consultant team. The workshops will enable them to both learn about the siting effort and, at the same time, have their opinions heard.

Timeframe:

The workshop on the draft policy criteria will occur in early August 2000. Additional workshops will be scheduled as appropriate throughout the siting effort.

Coordination with other King County DNR Activities

Description:

This technique provides a mechanism for King County employees, such as operations and maintenance people, to remain informed and give their input to the siting process. Activities could include an internal “update sheet”, peer advisory meetings, or on-site briefings. It is likely that staff involvement will become more important later in the siting process. However, we will want to make sure that all King County staff, especially those who deal with the public, have accurate and timely information regarding the project. We will also provide an avenue for the sharing of information between related departments and activities.

Purpose/role:

This technique gives those that have on-the-ground experience information on the siting process, and it ensures that King County employees are all working from the same base of knowledge with respect to the siting project. Likewise, we will want to make sure that other King County staff working, for example on ESA issues, have information about the siting process that they can integrate into their materials, and vice versa.

Timeframe:

This technique will occur throughout the project.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

King County staff

Milestone Two: The 'Top' Sites

Overview:

Milestone Two of the siting process will occur in the first quarter of 2001. At this stage, a relatively small number of sites (approximately 10-15) will remain under consideration. Between winter 2001 and fall 2001, these sites will be further narrowed, and system packages will be developed that include identified conveyance and outfall needs, as well as the actual plant site needs. In fall 2001, at Milestone Three, approximately 2-5 packages will remain under consideration.

The top sites identified at Milestone Two will be evaluated according to a broad range of criteria, including cost, engineering feasibility, design, environmental issues, opportunities for joint use, and compatibility with the surrounding community.

All of the public involvement methods that have been implemented previously will continue to be in place. In addition, however, it is expected that certain communities and neighborhoods may have a heightened sense of interest in the siting process, since the group of sites under consideration is narrowing. The public involvement effort will intensify, to include a number of opportunities for these specific communities to become more actively engaged in the process.

Public involvement techniques at this decision point will be developed to share information about the system packages, and give the public opportunities to provide input to King County related to evaluation criteria, package selection, and mitigation.

Opportunities to Influence the Decision-making Process

Members of the public will have the opportunity to influence the siting process in the following ways:

- The top sites (approximately 10-15) under consideration will be shared and open to public review. Citizens will have opportunities to comment on, and share information about, these sites.
- Citizens will have opportunities to learn about the way in which the criteria have been applied, and to review and comment on these activities.

Methods:

Decisions about exact methods will reflect issues raised in earlier public involvement efforts and the current status of the project. However, it is anticipated that in addition to all of the Milestone One public involvement methods, Milestone Two may include:

- North End project office
- A second round of public workshops
- Community Check-in Sessions

Information obtained from these, as well as the methods outlined previously, will be shared with King County/Consultant team, the Siting Advisory Committee, and the King County Executive.

Public Workshops

Description:

When the number of possible land areas has been narrowed to approximately 10-15 sites, the public will be invited to review, and comment on, the list of narrowed sites. Public workshops will be conducted over a one to two-week period in three locations, again, with the same agenda in three different places throughout south Snohomish/north King Counties. At these workshops, participants will receive materials describing all of the narrowed sites and how each site has fared through the criteria process, e.g. where it has scored high, where low, and why. Workshop attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions about the rankings, present information they believe might be relevant to the rankings, and/or question why other properties have not made it into the "10-15" pool of narrowed sites. Opportunities to comment will be made available in both an oral format, and via a "checklist" that attendees can fill out to indicate any additional questions/comments they might have about the siting results to date.

Purpose/role:

This will be the first time, since the June 2000 public workshops, that the general public will be able to see how the policy criteria have been applied, and how that application has resulted in a narrowed number of sites. It will be important to provide broad public input into the narrowed list of sites – this ensures that members of the public can have their questions answered, and can raise any additional issues they believe are important to consider at this stage and at future milestones.

These workshops will occur in conjunction with a number of other outreach activities. For example, all of the property owners as well as all of the jurisdiction of the sites that remain under consideration will be notified by King County.

Timeframe:

This series of workshops will occur after the narrowed list of sites has been made public, sometime during the first quarter of 2001.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:
The general public.

Community Check-in Sessions

Description:

A “community check-in” process may be established to facilitate two-way communication between project staff and community leaders. Through this process, King County and consultant staff members would meet regularly with leaders of neighborhood and community groups throughout the study area. These meetings would occur on a quarterly basis or on a monthly basis depending on the time in the process. The King County project manager, Michael Popiwny, would convene these meetings. They will be designed to ensure that the County is well-informed of any emerging issues, concerns, and other related needs of the affected communities. It may be appropriate, when the list of sites has been narrowed, to expand these sessions into “community advisory committees” around the 2-5 system packages.

Purpose/role:

To provide an informal forum for community leaders to regularly review, and comment on, the siting process and public involvement program. These intensive, regularly-scheduled interactions will ensure constant feedback from community leaders throughout the study area.

Timeframe:

Community check-ins will begin in Phase Two, if appropriate, and continue throughout the project.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

Neighborhood/community leaders located within the targeted study area.

North End Project Office

Description:

It is anticipated that a project office may be set up and maintained in the geographical vicinity of the sites still under consideration.

Purpose/role:

A project office may be appropriate when a smaller number of sites is under consideration. That may be in this phase or in the next phase when the system packages are under analysis. The office will provide an identifiable place where interested citizens can obtain current project information directly from King County/consultant team members. Likewise, citizens will be able to make comments directly to a real person at any time, and will not have to rely

on, or wait for, a public meeting to have their comments or opinions heard. This technique allows those citizens whom, for whatever reason, do not want to or cannot participate in one of the other formal methods, to remain involved in the siting process. Simply put, it will provide opportunities for citizens to make comments to a person who is directly involved with the siting process.

Timeframe:

It is anticipated that the office may be opened in this phase or in the next phase of planning.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

All constituent groups

Milestone Three: The 2-5 System Packages

Overview:

The third decision to occur on the siting process will take place in late 2001. At this point, the top sites will have been further narrowed to approximately 3-5 system packages. These packages, in turn, will be subject to extensive scrutiny and analysis through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process. By the end of 2002, it is anticipated that a single preferred site will have emerged and that County Executive Ron Sims will make a decision based on this preferred site.

Opportunities to Influence the Decision-Making Process

During this time, members of the public will have the opportunity to influence the process in the following ways:

- As the narrowing occurs, and the EIS process gets underway, specific mitigation measures will start to be developed. The type of mitigation that will occur will be dependent on the sites/packages that are under consideration. Constituent groups will help develop potential mitigation strategies that will help facilities best fit into their communities.
- Members of communities adjacent to the remaining sites will be significantly involved in both the design and mitigation aspects of the proposed facility. Hands-on workshops will be conducted to actively engage the surrounding communities and involve them in helping shape the mitigation packages.
- The public involvement requirements of the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) process will come into play during this phase. This adds public hearings to the menu of public involvement opportunities.

Methods:

Decisions about exact methods of involving the public will reflect the success of earlier public involvement efforts and the current status of the project. However, it is anticipated that we will continue with the public involvement activities that have occurred to date, as well as add new ones. They may include:

- Public Opinion Polling
- Community Design Support

- Outreach to the Next Generation
- Activities to support the EIS process

Public Opinion Polling

Description:

A poll of randomly selected north King and south Snohomish citizens will be taken to better understand the public's opinions of the siting process. While the specific questions to be asked are not known at this time, areas of interest include: understanding of the purpose and need for a new wastewater treatment plant, perceptions of fairness in the siting process, and perspectives on how the final siting decisions should be made.

Purpose/role:

Public opinion polling will allow King County to obtain a statistically valid sample of citizen opinions on the siting process in this final phase. This technique makes it possible to reach and talk to a broad range of publics in a short period of time. Depending on how it is implemented, polling can gather quick opinions or it can probe the values and perceptions of participants on a deeper level. This technique should complement the use of other public involvement methods, either by reconfirming the findings from other methods, or by seeking information from the public that is not possible to obtain through the implementation of other methods.

Timeframe:

Polling is likely to take place fall of 2002. The exact timing will be determined to avoid conflict with the SEPA process.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

The general public.

Community Design Support

Description:

Specific communities or areas will be engaged in a process that facilitates the brainstorming of ideas about the final list of sites, addresses community concerns, and actively and creatively engages participants in the discussion and/or resolution of engineering, environmental, design and mitigation issues. This technique will give participants a 'hands-on' experience, as they work with the King County/Consultant team to work through some of the final challenges associated with the siting of the facility, conveyance route, and outfall. Workshops can be formatted in a variety of ways: all-day drop-in opportunities with or without subject-specific 'work areas', as a series of

intense 2-3 hour sessions that deal with one or two subjects at a time, or some combination thereof.

Purpose/role:

These opportunities are designed to deliver information and encourage discussion and comments that are specific to the development of the proposed sites. The workshops will not be used to convey or receive information on a general level. Other methods, such as the project newsletter and public displays will be used in that capacity.

Timeframe:

These workshops will take place in 2002.

As part of the meetings, or shortly after their completion, the County may choose to develop a computer-generated video to illustrate the design and mitigation details that will become part of the final package to be negotiated and agreed to between the County and the host community.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

Neighborhood and community groups, special interest groups, and the general public.

Outreach to the Next Generation

Description:

Technique(s) and timing for the involvement of school-age citizens has not yet been determined. However, there are several options under consideration for implementation. They could be used as an individual technique, or as an integrated technique. Some options are:

- A series of presentations and discussions with “willing” area schools.
- A long-term advisory committee, made up of 9-10 year olds, to remain involved throughout the entire siting process.
- Subject-specific discussion groups to tackle “issues of interest” in depth from the youth perspective. Areas of discussion could include mitigation, environmental impacts, etc.
- A curriculum-based siting study: give local science class(es) much of the same information King County will use to make the decision, and let them try to decide where the new facilities should go.

Purpose/role:

There is high value in reaching out to a representative group of students to help the siting process meet its stated goals. The scope will include, but may not be limited to: being informed of the siting process at a general level via presentations; providing input to project milestones; and generating mitigation ideas and methods.

Timeframe:

The schedule is to be determined.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

School-age citizens in north King and south Snohomish counties.

Public Involvement to Support the EIS

Description:

The King County/Consultant team will develop and implement public involvement opportunities, to ensure that SEPA public comment requirements are met. Public meetings and hearings will be the central focus of this process, but other mechanisms that utilize existing methods will be used to provide the public with opportunities to participate in this process. For example, comment forms may be made available at public display areas, copies of the draft and final EIS' will be available online and in public libraries. In addition, speaker's bureau presentations will discuss the EIS and the opportunities to comment.

Purpose/role:

These activities will be implemented to meet the legal requirements of the SEPA process -- to provide access to information and opportunities for input -- to get the 'word out' about the process and minimize surprises to King County and other interested parties.

Timeframe:

The timing will be determined by SEPA requirements.

Core constituencies targeted by this technique:

All interested citizens.

Milestone Four: The Preferred Site

Overview

At the end of 2002-beginning 2003, King County Executive Ron Sims will make a decision on a preferred site for the new treatment plant and associated facilities. Subsequent planning and review activities will include added opportunities for public outreach and comment. Specific public involvement activities around this decision will be determined closer to the date of the actual decision by the Executive.